



1430
20 May 2011

MEMORANDUM

From: R. T. Hendrickson, CDR
CGC MOHAWK (WMEC-913) *for Mr. Arnold*

To: COMDT (CG-133)

Subj: 2011 SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN CONTEST

Ref: (a) ALCOAST 104/11

1. I nominate the crew of CGC MOHAWK (WMEC-913) for recognition in the 2011 Spotlight on Leadership Campaign Contest. With the advent of the Medium Endurance Cutter Multi Crew initiative, the crew of CGC MOHAWK found themselves without a ship. Some would argue that a crew without a ship lacks both symbolically and physically a focal point to unify and bond a group of people. However, the crew of MOHAWK, through leadership, transformed this situation into an opportunity to explore external avenues of service which ultimately provided rewarding experiences and fostered lasting bonds with the community. Through multiple activities in the local Key West area, crewmembers of MOHAWK practiced a multitude of leadership competencies namely: followership, respect for others and diversity management, management process and improvement, and partnering.
2. Followership: One of the most important traits of a leader is learning first to be a follower. Similarly in order to help others, it is useful to have been previously helped so you can anticipate needs and potential questions. MOHAWK crewmembers chose to volunteer at a K-5 Sigsbee charter school. At first volunteers carried out simple tasks such as serving in the cafeteria, reading in the library, and supervising on the playground. The positive impact for students and teachers was quickly recognized and MOHAWK crewmembers were asked to provide additional help by participating in an afternoon mentorship program dubbed "Study Buddy's." Volunteers were paired with a single student to provide after school homework help and serve as a mentor. This included arithmetic, reading comprehension, and creative activities. Most importantly, the contact with a positive role model who is able to demonstrate good study habits and is simply willing to listen.
3. Respect for Others and Diversity Management: The Star of the Sea (SOS) Mission Outreach is a non-profit organization located on Stock Island, Key West. The SOS is primarily a food bank that serves the poor and homeless in the Key West area, but also provides furniture, clothing, and other services. The workforce is comprised solely of volunteers, including members of MOHAWK's crew. From filling shopping bags with donated food items to repairing plumbing and electrical problems, volunteers have helped bring SOS's operation up to full steam. However the most meaningful interactions occur at the check in desk where crewmembers meet with customers. The customers of SOS come from all types of races, genders, backgrounds, education levels, experiences, and living situations. Some are homeless individuals while others come from large families. The person checking them in warmly greets the person and begins assessing their living situation and their needs. After a brief interview the person is given a food package and is allowed to pick out some additional

items. The experience at SOS has been positive for both those serving and those being served.

4. **Management Process and Improvement:** Many Coast Guard units are based in Key West, including Medium Endurance Cutters, Patrol Boats, and a Small Boat Station. In addition Key West is also home to CGC INGHAM (WPG-35) and CGC MOHAWK (WPG-78), both of which served with distinction in World War II and are now museums open to the public. Both cutters, although well preserved, lack personnel to complete restoration projects and give tours. Full time volunteers found themselves attempting to strike a balance between showcasing the cutters and preserving them for the future, and achieving little success with either endeavor. Sensitive to this need a group of MOHAWK crewmembers lent their time to the full time volunteers, who maintain both cutters simultaneously. Crewmembers stepped into multiple positions: tour guides, hull repairs, berthing area renovations, and main deck preservation. The influx in the workforce dramatically changed the ability of the full time volunteers to focus solely on detail oriented projects such as installing new equipment in the galley and repairing a sewage pump. By alleviating the work load of the volunteers, the crewmembers from MOHAWK were able to help preserve our heritage and maintain our legacy.
5. **Partnering:** Recently, a pod of pilot whales were spotted near Cudjoe Bay, an area far shallower than their normal habitat. Experts are unsure what caused these unusual movements, but after 12 whales had perished, it was obvious the whales had to be relocated. After discovering a pod of 7 remaining whales, professionals from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Sea World Rescue, Florida Keys Marine Mammal Rescue, Marine Mammal Conservancy, Dolphins Plus, National Marine Sanctuary Law Enforcement, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Ocean Embassy, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission banded together to attempt to aid the weakening creatures. One crewmember from MOHAWK heard about the disaster and decided to assist in any way possible. After a brief meeting was conducted a plan was developed to return the healthiest males back into safer waters. The MOHAWK crewmember prepared the NOAA research boat to protect the frail and exhausted whales for a 4 hour journey to open ocean. After the whales were safely loaded, rescuers cautiously monitored the whale's vitals. After arriving at the designated area the whales were safely released, returning to their natural habitat far from the dangers of Cudjoe Bay. Although small in scale, collaborations such as these are what make the Coast Guard successful in larger operations because we as an organization understand how to work effectively with others, irrespective of our differences.
6. Although MOHAWK's approach to the Spotlight on Leadership Campaign may appear unconventional by some standards, crewmembers took on the challenge of identifying a need, devised a solution, and carried out the plan until completion. Although no group discussions, games, power points, or movies were used, the practical application of leadership competencies provided invaluable experiences for all involved.

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